

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the amendments above and the remarks following is respectfully requested.

Claims 15-28 are in this case. Claims 20-27 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner as drawn to a non-elected species. Claims 15-19 and 28 have been rejected under § 102(b). Independent claim 15 has now been amended.

Telephone Interview Summary

Reference is made to a brief telephone interview conducted on July 10, 2006, between Examiner Sarah Webb for the PTO and Mr. Daniel Michaels, speaking under the auspices of Dr. Mark Friedman, for the Applicant. The interview addressed the § 102(b) rejection of independent claim 15 over Das. No formal agreement was reached as to the allowability of any claim.

The Applicant questioned how the Examiner could read the language of claim 15 on the Das reference, specifically referring to the “*first state in which said closed loop is folded on itself and substantially straightened.*” The Applicant particularly pointed out the folded state of Das as shown in Figure 8, which is clearly not “substantially straightened” as required by the claim language.

In response, the Examiner indicated that the language “could be read very broadly”, and suggested that the language be further clarified. The Applicant suggested addition of the words: “*substantially straightened so as to extend substantially parallel to said feed direction.*” The Examiner indicated that this language would probably distinguish over the Das reference, but indicated that she would need to review the documents more thoroughly and check whether she has other art to cite against this language.

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for her helpfulness in this matter.

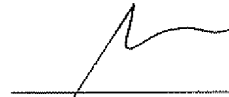
§ 102(b) Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 15-19 and 28 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Das (US 5334217). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed above in the context of the telephone interview summary, the Applicant submits herewith an amendment to independent claim 15 clarifying that the first state of the loop is "*substantially straightened so as to extend substantially parallel to said feed direction.*" This language is believed to further distinguish over the Das reference, thereby overcoming the claim rejections based on § 102(b). Reconsideration of these rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 15, and hence also dependent claims 16-28, are in condition for allowance. Prompt notice of allowance is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: July 11, 2006